

**AREA VI DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday May 25, 2004  
City-County Administration Building  
Modesto, CA

**Board Members Present:**

Dierdre Wright, Chair  
Gary Del Nero  
Mary Dye  
Roberta Wegner  
Fred Edmondson  
Anna Newman

**Staff:**

Robert Phillips, Executive Director  
Paul Symmonds, CPS II

**Board Members Absent:**

Ian Allen  
Robert Botto  
Steve Nicolaou  
Brad Putz  
Traci Trujillo, Vice Chair

**Facilitators:**

Ryan Marohl

**The meeting began at 6:10 pm. No quorum.**

**Introductions:** Board members and audience members introduced themselves. Guests included Jayne Bush, Donald Roberts, Krisi Franzone, Connie O'Dea, Mary Harris and Angela Nissinoff

**Public Comment:** None at this time.

**Community Reports:**

**Habilitation Report:** Jayne Bush, Assistant Manager of Case Management for VMRC, presented information on the transfer of Habilitation services from the Department of Rehabilitation to DDS, and how this change would be managed for the 400 consumers of Hab services at the local level. VMRC is hoping to accomplish this transition with minimal disruption of services. There may also be advantages to VMRC administering this program, such as: greater flexibility with supportive services; better coordination of transition age students, so that they can go straight from stable Workability placements to Hab extended services; more flexibility on purchases of Hab hours; increased opportunities for seasonal work, and overall improvement in the continuum of services. Some concerns that still need to be addressed are: consumer fears about losses of benefits due to employment; the effects of loss of employment on income/benefits; the need for workers and consumers to have a better understanding of work incentives; and the need to minimize lay-offs and maintain service levels when consumers move from one job that ends to another similar situation. Ms Bush emphasized that VMRC is committed to making the Hab system work in concert with all other services and supports, and is in the process of conducting trainings for providers and VMRC staff to assure this is accomplished.

**Action items:**

**May Budget Revise:** Mr. Phillips reviewed the governor's latest budget revision, which is also addressed in more detail in an article of our recent newsletter. The state received over \$2 billion in unanticipated tax revenue from various sources, so there are fewer cuts contained in the most recent budget. However, some things still contained in the budget are troublesome, such as: the proposal that IHSS need no longer have a public authority; POS Standards; the modified version of the Family Co-pay provision; and the lack of COLA for SSI recipients.

**Advocacy:** Connie O'Dea of SEIU, who is an organizer of advocacy for services to people with developmental disabilities, spoke on recent developments. Several committees of grass roots advocates have been organized recently. Among their recent activities:

4/19/04: A group attended the DD services hearing at the Capitol and lobbied members for their support of needed services.

4/22/04: A rally and march was organized in conjunction with IHSS hearings in Sacramento.

5/12/04: A group of advocates for seniors' rights lobbied legislators.

5/20/04: Capitol Action Day saw marches and lobbying activities in the Capitol for all disability advocacy groups.

Upcoming events mentioned by Connie were:

6/8/04: The Health Care Caravan (which advocates health care needs for everyone) is coming through Stockton. A rally will be held here.

6/16/04: 8649 legislation will be before the Assembly's Human Services Commission. A turnout of advocates is needed there.

6/19/04: The National Health Care March is staging a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge in SF. Several thousand are expected to participate.

The next meeting of this group is 6/7/04. Contact Connie for details.

Several audience members and board members commented on the need to continue strong advocacy for services in the face of impending cuts. Mr. Phillips made the point that, though the governor has made promises to counties, cities and education regarding budget adjustments, he has, so far, made no promises to health & human services. He also encouraged board members to be as active as their schedules will allow them to be, and that he would facilitate scheduling for advocacy events for them whenever possible.

**CLASP Report:** No report was given.

**Self-Advocacy Council VI Report:** No report was given. Brad Putz and Nicole Patterson are currently attending the National Self-Advocacy Conference in Anaheim, CA, where they are both speakers.

**Agency Reports:**

**Board Members' Suggestions and Reports:** *Dierdre Wright* reported on her involvement with Special Ed & Transition issues in Tuolumne County. Recently, a committee was formed to increase knowledge and opportunities for students transitioning from high school to community college. *Mary Dye* commented on her own experience with a seminar in high school that focused on preparation for independent living, and the need for continued involvement in learning through transition times. She also commented on the need for logistical support that allows consumers to be involved in advocacy events, and the ongoing

problems of transportation in Amador County. *Anna Newman* stated that she will invite the local Supported Living provider to their next Self-Advocacy group meeting to discuss transportation problems. *Gary Del Nero* spoke about his involvement with the Stanislaus County Transition Committee and their efforts to produce a resource guide for high school graduates that will assist in gaining access to adult services. He also commented on the need for more job opportunities for transition age students, and better tracking of the services now being provided.

**Executive Committee Report:**

- a) Mr. Phillips reported on problems with the LQA budget and plans to address them.
- b) Area Board 6 brochures have been developed and distributed to all VMRC offices, and many other agencies.
- c) The AB6 newsletter is now being distributed electronically to all VMRC service coordinators, and we will continue to expand this delivery method in order to save postage and other costs.
- d) Our AB6 website is now averaging over a thousand visits per month.
- e) The Executive Committee recently gave a presentation to the VMRC board regarding goals that the two agencies have in common in the areas of Work, Health Care and Legislation. The purpose was to promote cooperation between the agencies in advocating and developing programs in these areas.

**Advocacy Report:** Paul Symmonds reported on advocacy issues for which the Area Board provided assistance and representation over the past quarter, noting that activities in this area are currently at a high level.

**Executive Director:** Robert Phillips reported on SCDD grants, highlighting the UCP/ SJRT program in our area that received grant funds. He announced that Anitra Hankins is resigning from the board due to family and health concerns. He also presented a copy of the booklet, *From Conversation to Action*, developed by a statewide consumer advocacy committee. Donald Roberts, who was on the committee, explained the process of its development and gave a personal account of his experiences with the IPP process which led to his involvement in the booklet.

**State Council on Developmental Disabilities:** Mr. Phillips commented on SCDD's recent action to oppose POS Standards, IHSS cuts and other budget items (contained in minutes of their recent meeting). He also mentioned the Council's recent Task Force to compile ideas from a brainstorming session on communication, policy & procedure and morale into a working format.

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.